



HELLO PARENTS,

Natural materials, such as twigs, leaves, shells, pinecones, rocks, sand, etc., should be an integral element of a child's play. Natural resources are easily accessible and can encourage children to observe closely using all their senses. Embracing natural materials can benefit children's experiences and enhance their learning ability by stimulating their creativity and imagination. In this newsletter, we provide many activities for your child to explore natural materials.

ACTIVITIES

INFANTS (3 – 18 MONTHS)

RAIN BOTTLE

MATERIALS:

- Transparent plastic bottle with lid
- Sticks or twigs shorter than the bottle
- Small rocks or shells

DIRECTIONS:

- Place the sticks and rocks inside the bottle and close the lid tightly.
- Invite your child to explore the bottle and its contents.
- Observe your child as they explore the bottle. They may look at the rocks or shells moving around the sticks, shake the bottle and make sounds, etc.
- Comment on what your child is doing.
- Encourage your child to move the bottle upside down or roll it on the floor.

[Click here](#) for more ideas.

TODDLERS (19 MONTHS – 2.5 YEARS)

LOOK AND LEARN

MATERIALS:

- Leaves
- Nuts
- Flowers
- Tray
- Twigs
- Pinecones
- Magnifying glass
- Few small containers

DIRECTIONS:

- Go outside with your child and collect some natural materials listed above.
- Place the collected items on a tray and invite your child to explore them.
- Describe the items that your child is exploring.
- Provide your child with the magnifying glass to expand their investigations.
- Add containers for sorting the materials.

[Click here](#) for more ideas.

PRESCHOOLERS (2.5 – 5 YEARS)

PINECONE PAINTING

MATERIALS:

- Empty cardboard box
- Pinecones
- Paint
- Paper

DIRECTIONS:

- Place a blank piece of paper inside the box.
- Have your child pick out what colours they would like to use, and squeeze paint onto a pinecone.
- Place the pinecone in the box, and show your child how to tilt the box to make the pinecone roll around.
- Have your child continue tilting the box and encourage them to observe the print the pinecone left behind.
- When the painting is finished, remove the paper and let it dry.

[Click here](#) for more activities.

JK/SK (4 – 6 YEARS)

LEAF THREADING

MATERIALS:

- Leaves
- Sticks
- Yarn

DIRECTIONS:

- Go outside with your child and collect leaves and sticks.
- Talk about and compare the leaves' different sizes, shapes and colours.
- Make a simple "needle" by tying yarn on one end of a small stick.
- Encourage your child to push their stick needle through the leaves and thread them onto the yarn.
- To make this activity more challenging, ask your child to create their own patterns using different colours, shapes or sizes of the leaves.
- Once the leaf threading is finished, hang it up in a window or outside under a tree.
- Enjoy watching the leaves dry and change colours over time.

[Click here](#) to for more activities.

SCHOOL-AGERS (6 – 12 YEARS)

A LITTLE BOAT

MATERIALS:

- Stick
- Pipe cleaner
- Water
- Plastic container, for example a lunch box
- Tape
- Leaf

DIRECTIONS:

- Place a stick in the middle of a plastic container. Wrap a pipe cleaner around the stick one time, and use tape to fix both sides of the pipe cleaner on the edge of the container. Make sure the stick is standing in the middle of the container.
- Fill the container with water and put it in the freezer.
- When the water is frozen, remove the tape and pipe cleaner, and take the ice out from the container.
- Insert a leaf on the stick to use as a sail.
- Place the ice boat in a bathtub or a large container filled with water.
- Observe how the ice boat floats on the water.

[Click here](#) for more ideas.



A TIP FOR TODAY

- Take a walk or play outdoors and observe objects in nature.
- Create treasure baskets with various natural materials for your child to explore.
- Discuss with your child ways they use the natural materials as they build, sort, design and manipulate them in different ways.
- Encourage your child to explore natural materials with all of their senses.